

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 004599

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TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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TAGS:PDIP, PINS, GR, US

SUBJECT: WASHINGTON POST LETTER AND EDITORIAL RE WELCH
ASSASSINATION

1. WE THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE INTERESTED IN LETTER AND EDITORIAL ON WELCH ASSASSINATION WHICH APPEARED IN JANUARY 7 EDITION OF WASHINGTON POST.

2. BEGIN TEXT OF LETTER. "COUNTERSPY: AN 'ANTI-DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM'"

-- WHAT YOUR DECEMBER 28 EDITORIAL ON RICHARD WELCH FAILED TO DEAL WITH IS THAT WE ARE REFLECTING ON A SYSTEMIC NOT A PERSONALISTIC PROBLEM. THIS SYSTEMIC PROBLEM INVOLVES U.S. GOVERNMENT-DIRECTED AND CIA-EXECUTED PLANS TO SUBVERT OR OVERTHROW CERTAIN FOREIGN REGIMES WHICH CHALLENGE "OUR" SYSTEM. THE CLEAREST EXAMPLE OF THIS WAS THE SUBVERSION AND OVERTHROW OF THE DEMOCRATICALLY BASED SOCIALIST GOVERNMENT OF SALVADOR ALLENDE. IN THE PROCESS, NOT ONLY WAS ALLENDE ASSASSINATED AND THAT GOVERNMENT ELIMINATED, BUT IT RESULTED IN THE MURDER, IMPRISONMENT AND EXODUS OF TENS OF THOUSANDS OF CHILEANS. SO, WE ARE NOT TALKING ABOUT SOME "ABUSES" IN THE POLICIES OF THE CIA; WE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE SYSTEMATIC DESTRUCTION OF CERTAIN GOVERNMENTS

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PAGE 02 STATE 004599

BY CERTAIN U.S. LEADERS WHO SEE THOSE GOVERNMENTS AS A THREAT TO OUR CAPITALISTIC SYSTEM AND-OR GEOPOLITICAL HEGEMONY. SO, LET'S AT LEAST BE HONEST ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM AND NOT DISCUSS IT AS THOUGH IT WERE A MATTER OF MORALITY INVOLVING SOME INNOCENT INDIVIDUALS.

-- THE POST EDITORIAL SPEAKS OF RICHARD WELCH AS AN ORDINARY "AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVING HIS GOVERNMENT AND ACCUSED OF NO CRIME." MUCH TO CONTRARY, THE CIA'S WELCHES ARE SERVING A SYSTEM AND THEIR CRIMES ARE OF THE MOST SERIOUS NATURE IMAGINABLE--THE OVERTHROW OF A GOVERNMENT. FURTHERMORE, THESE CRIMES ARE CARRIED OUT IN SUCH A WAY THAT NO INDIVIDUAL CIA AGENT WILL EVER BE FOUND GUILTY, EVEN THOUGH THEY ENGINEERED THE CRIME.

-- MOST AMERICANS OPPOSE OUR GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONING IN SUCH A MANNER ... ONCE THEY DISCOVER WHAT IS GOING ON. AND THE ONLY WAY THE AMERICAN PEOPLE LEARN ABOUT SUCH CLANDESTINE COUNTER-INSURGENCY IS PRECISELY THROUGH EXPOSES LIKE THOSE OF COUNTERSPY BY THE FIFTH ESTATE, OR THOSE BY A PHILIP AGEY, OR THOSE BY A JOHN MARKS. THE POST HAVING TAKEN ON THE WATERGATE SCANDAL -- BEFORE IT BECAME SUCH -- MUST SURELY UNDERSTAND THIS PROCESS AS WELL AS ANYONE. THE POST EDITORIAL, HOWEVER, WANTS TO LEAVE SUCH CIA INVESTIGATIONS AND REVELATIONS TO CONGRESSIONAL DUE PROCESS, FORGETTING THAT THE PRESENT CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS WOULD NEVER HAVE OCCURRED WITHOUT INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS LIKE THE FIFTH ESTATE FIRST REVEALING THE TRUTH.

-- THE POST MOURNS THE DEATH OF RICHARD WELCH; SO DOES THE STAFF OF THE FIFTH ESTATE. BUT DOES THE POST EQUALLY MOURN THE MASSACRE AND TORTURE OF THOUSANDS OF CHILEANS WHICH WAS CAUSED BY A SYSTEM THAT USES THE CIA AS ITS SHOCK TROOPS? AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, DOES THE POST MOURN THOSE HUMAN TRAGEDIES IN TERMS OF CRITIQUING THAT SYSTEM?

-- IF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE GOING TO SURVIVE AS A FREE SOCIETY, IT WILL ONLY BE THROUGH FIGHTING THIS KIND OF AN ANTI-DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM WITHIN OUR MIDST. WE ARE AT WAR
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PAGE 03 STATE 004599

WITH SUCH A SYSTEM; A WAR BETWEEN TWO CONFLICTING VISIONS OF OUR SOCIETY. WE CAN ONLY SAVE THIS SOCIETY BY EXPOSING SUCH A SYSTEM. THAT'S WHAT COUNTERSPY IS DOING. PHILIP E. WHEATON, ADVISORY BOARD, COUNTERSPY. END TEXT OF LETTER.

3. BEGIN TEXT OF POST EDITORIAL. "MR. WELCH AND MR. WHEATON."

-- TO PHILIP WHEATON, WHOSE LETTER IS PUBLISHED TODAY, THERE IS WITHIN AMERICAN SOCIETY AN "ANTI-DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM" THAT "USES THE CIA AS ITS SHOCK TROOPS" TO DEFEND "OUR CAPITALISTIC SYSTEM AND/OR GEOPOLITICAL HEGEMONY" AROUND THE WORLD. WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE AGENCY IS NOT SOME "ABUSES" IN ITS POLICIES BUT ITS NATURE AND EXISTENCE. "WE ARE AT WAR WITH SUCH A SYSTEM," HE DECLARES. "WE CAN ONLY SAVE THIS SOCIETY BY EXPOSING SUCH A SYSTEM." HENCE HIS ORGANIZATION, COUNTERSPY, PUBLICLY IDENTIFIED RICHARD WELCH, THE CIA OFFICER SUBSEQUENTLY MURDERED IN ATHENS. IT INTENDS TO CONTINUE ITS CHOSEN WORK.

-- ANYONE WHO BELIEVES WITH MR. WHEATON THAT HIS CAUSE IS HOLY (TO "SAVE THIS SOCIETY") WILL HAVE NO TROUBLE ACCEPTING HIS ARGUMENT THAT THE EXPOSURE OF CIA MEN, EVEN IF EXPOSURE LEADS TO THEIR DEATH, IS NECESSARY AND RIGHT. AFTER ALL, "WE ARE AT WAR." WE, HOWEVER, DO NOT SO BELIEVE. WE DON'T BELIEVE HIS CAUSE IS HOLY; NOR DO WE EXPECT HIM TO BELIEVE THAT OUR VIEW OF THIS COMPLEX SITUATION IS HOLY. WE WOULD PREFER THAT THE MATTER OF HOLINESS BE ENTIRELY REMOVED FROM DEBATE OVER THE CIA. FOR, AS SO MUCH HISTORY SHOULD HAVE TAUGHT US ALL, A DECLARATION OF SACRED PURPOSE HAS ALL TOO OFTEN ANNOUNCED A READINESS TO ALLOW THE END TO JUSTIFY THE MEANS. MR. WHEATON'S PHILOSOPHY IS SIMILAR IN ITS ESSENTIALS TO THAT OF THE VERY NATIONAL SECURITY STATE WHICH HE ATTACKS: IN THE NAME OF THE CAUSE HE WOULD SEE MURDER DONE.

-- MR. WHEATON SKIPS MUCH TOO LIGHTLY OVER THE QUESTION OF WHAT MR. WELCH MIGHT HAVE DONE TO DESERVE HIS FATE. IT IS NOT THE ONE MAN WELCH BUT "THE CIA'S WELCHES" WHO SUDDENLY, COLLECTIVELY, ARE SWEEPED UP BY HIS VIEW OF UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 004599

HISTORY AND CONSIGNED TO GUILT FOR "SERVING A SYSTEM." SPEAKING AS A NEWSPAPER WHICH CRITICIZED THE ALLENDE OVERTHROW IN CHILE AND WHICH HAS CONDEMNED THE PRACTICE OF ASSASSINATION, WE FIND THIS AN APPALLING AND MORALLY OPAQUE PROCESS BY WHICH TO DISPOSE OF A HUMAN LIFE. MR. WHEATON WOULD NOT EVEN GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF A TRIAL, THE CLASSICAL PROCEDURE FOR DETERMINING INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY.

-- TO BE SURE, IN LAMENTING THAT THE CIA'S "CRIMES ARE CARRIED OUT IN SUCH A WAY THAT NO INDIVIDUAL CIA AGENT WILL EVER BE FOUND GUILTY," MR. WHEATON HAS A POINT, THOUGH NOT NECESSARILY ONE HE WOULD MAKE HIMSELF. THE

POINT IS THAT DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES DO POORLY AT VENGEANCE.

THEY DO NOT QUICKLY AND SUMMARILY PIN BLAME, ONCE OFFICIAL
POLICY CHANGES, ON THOSE WHO CREATED AND CARRIED OUT PAST
POLICY, AND TREAT THEM AS VILLAINS. DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES
ARE IN THAT SENSE FLABBY. NO DOUBT JUSTICE WOULD BE MORE
SWIFT AND SURE IN THE SOCIETY MR. WHEATON WISHES TO "SAVE."
BUT WE ARE NOT SO SURE WE ARE READY TO RECEIVE HIS GRACE.

-- THE FACT IS THAT THERE IS A CRUCIAL DISTINCTION TO BE
MADE BETWEEN EXPOSING THE POLICIES AND PRACTICES OF AN
ERRANT GOVERNMENT AGENCY IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE REFORM,
AND ACTING IN A WAY TO PUT THE LIVES OF PARTICULAR GOVERN-
MENT EMPLOYEES AT EXTRA-LEGAL JEOPARDY. IT IS NOT NECES-
SARY, IN ORDER TO FAVOR REFORM, TO CONDONE DISCLOSURE
TACTICS WHICH CAN LEAD TO ASSASSINATION. WE ARE NOT
APOLOGISTS FOR THE CIA'S "ABUSES" BUT NEITHER DO WE FEEL
THAT THE AGENCY, OR EVEN ITS COVERT OPERATIONS FUNCTION,
SHOULD BE ABOLISHED, AND LEAST OF ALL BECAUSE THE AGENCY
REPRESENTS A CORRUPT "SYSTEM." THE PREMISE OF DEMOCRACY
IS THAT THE PEOPLE, THROUGH THEIR REPRESENTATIVES AND
OFFICIALS, CAN USE POWER WISELY AND WELL. UNLIKE MR.
WHEATON, WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO WRITE THAT PREMISE OFF.
END TEXT OF EDITORIAL. KISSINGER

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